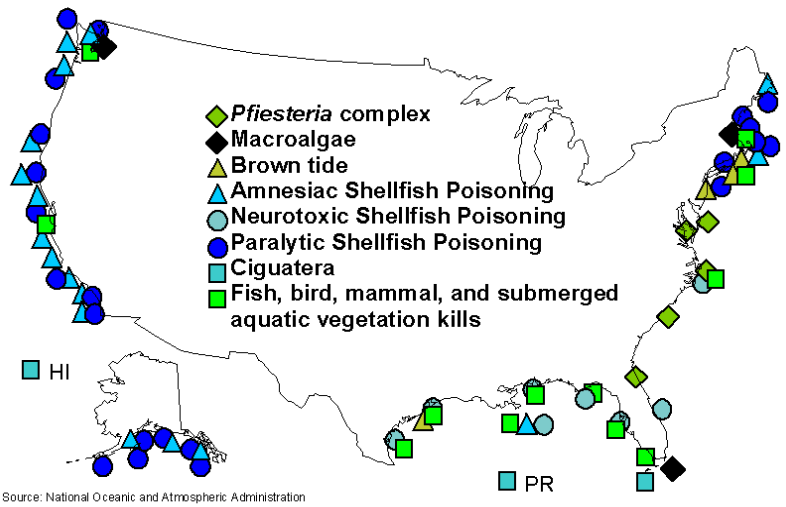
NOAA FY 2000 Budget Request Fact Sheet

CLEAN WATER INITIATIVE

Control of Harmful Algal Blooms

NOAA requests a total of $9.0 million under this initiative in FY 2000, an increase of $1.8 million, to enhance and expand efforts required to minimize the impacts of Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) and other algae on coastal waters and public health. These funds will support increases in activities related to HABs and related water quality issues. The Control of Harmful Algal Blooms is a key component of NOAA's FY 2000 Clean Water Initiative, with the other components being State Partnerships to reduce Polluted Runoff and the Coastal Resource Coordination Program. The Clean Water Initiative is a modest investment to help restore and protect our valuable coastal waters that support billions of dollars of economic activities every year through tourism, recreation, and commercial fishing.

Major HAB-related Events in the Coastal U.S.



Source: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

The Growing Problem of Algal Blooms

Among coastal issues facing the nation today, harmful (toxic and non-toxic) algal blooms are an expanding problem causing loss of habitat, moratoria on fish and shellfish harvests, depressed local economies, and threats to public health. Habitat loss is exemplified by the loss of coral reefs in southern Florida, while reduced public collection of razor clams in the Pacific Northwest during *Pseudo-nitizschia* blooms is one example of HAB impacts on fisheries and local economies. Increasing threats to public health are also major concerns for many coastal regions including: toxic bloom susceptible areas of New England, the far west, and Alaska; toxic bloom prevalent regions of the Gulf Coast; and, the tropics and sub-tropics as typified by ciguatera poisonings. The list of affected resources, economies, and habitats affected by HABs is growing and, while our ability to approach these problems has increased through recent intra-and interagency efforts like the Council on Environmental Quality's mandated National Event Response Plan, much more remains to be done to address this major national problem.

NOAA Budget	FY 2000 Request $ M
National Ocean Service	
Ocean Resources Conservation & Assessment	
(Coastal Resource Coordination)	1.0
(Control of Harmful Algal Blooms)	9.0
Ocean & Coastal Management	
(Reduce Polluted Runoff)	12.0
NOAA Clean Water Initiative- - Total	**22.0**

* NOAA's FY 2000 budget request includes a total of $10.4 million for NOAA's National Algal Bloom Science Program to support HAB/Pfiesteria research, monitoring, and assessment activities.

Responding to the Problem

NOAA has taken the lead in the Federal response to this problem by focusing its research, monitoring, and assessment capabilities and its academic partnerships on improving the scientific basis for understanding, predicting, and controlling HAB events. Funds will enable NOAA to continue support for state bloom response, monitoring and assessment activities; facilitate expansion of national efforts to monitor, understand, and assess full impacts of algal blooms; expand research through the Ecology and Oceanography of Harmful Algal Blooms (ECOHAB) program; evaluate options for the management,

control and mitigation of bloom effects; and accelerate development of HAB cell and toxin detection methods. These efforts include:

- interagency cooperation through the ECOHAB research programs to develop models for forecasting the development and impacts of HABs;
- strengthening NOAA-state partnerships for improving HAB monitoring and assessment capabilities;
- development of capabilities to assist states in responding quickly to HAB events; and
- research on the linkages of coastal eutrophication, HABs, and hypoxia/anoxia to nutrient loads in coastal ecosystems.

NOAA's Role

NOAA has a focused multidisciplinary science approach to these algal bloom problems and the accompanying symptoms of coastal degradation through its National Algal Bloom Program. The program supports research, monitoring, assessment, and the development of technologies to provide decision makers with timely information to respond to HABs and to develop effective control and prevention strategies for all algal bloom related problems. For example, NOAA conducts and supports state monitoring and assessment efforts for selected HAB problems; workshops, training sessions, and a national clearing house for rapid distribution of HAB-specific information; development and testing of new toxin assays for *pfiesteria*, related organisms, and other HAB species; oversight and coordination of the Federal event response capability; and the national leadership in the interagency ECOHAB program designed to develop forecasting models for HAB landfall and toxicity in our coastal waters. Within these encompassing HAB activities, NOAA is the appropriate lead organization for continued focused efforts on rapid development of a national HAB capability.

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